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Dear Fritz:

Thank you for your letter of September 24 on RFA. A critique covering much of the same terrain was received some time ago and RFA's comments thereon turned over to Mr. Conlon, then of IIA. Another copy is attached for your information.

I am sorry to say that I do not find the critique entirely valid. For example, where matters of taste are concerned, I think we are justified in relying on such Chinese as Chang Fu-yun and L. Z. Yuan to provide us with the most reliable possible estimate of acceptability. On the score of credibility, there is a difference, I believe, between VOA and RFA which must be taken into consideration: that VOA, with the honor of the Government at stake, must establish credibility for credibility's sake; whereas RFA must establish credibility with the less noble intent that "lines" which depart from the straight and narrow will be believed. As for the matter of "speaking for Asians", I believe that this problem will be solved by the discontinuance of direct broadcasting from San Francisco and its replacement with indigenous vehicles, as now proposed and under consideration by PSB.

Paragraph 8 of the critique appears to pose an incorrect premise, inasmuch as the Burmese Government is in fact quietly seeking to build up Buddhism (with CFA assistance) for the very purpose of strengthening Burmese resistance to Communism. We agree, however, that the forces of Buddhism need not be dragged over to our side to be of the most effective service to us. The slight deviation in Paragraph 7 from the "Kremlin domination" theme which you cite as basic policy does not, to my mind, represent a harmful departure from that theme and, rather, tends to support it. Nor does the script you attach strike me as necessarily inimical to defection.

We must concede, however, that RFA has made and will continue to make mistakes. We are in a highly experimental field in which

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our evaluative processes are not sufficiently developed to make categorical determinations possible. We can minimize these mistakes only by providing to RFA and CFA the best possible constructive and detailed guidance, which they are both eager to receive. We would welcome any assistance you can provide in this respect.

As you know, we are presently undertaking to revamp RFA in the hope of eliminating the American context of present broadcasts. I believe that, with the completion of that task, many of the problems which you raise will be eradicated.

Sincerely,

FRANK G. WISNER
Deputy Director (Plans)

Enclosure
Memo of 2 July on
Criticism of RFA Broadcasts.

Mr. Frederick E. Nolting, Jr.
Department of State
Washington 25, D. C.